

Community Update

June 2021

EPA encourages public participation. If you have any questions or would like additional information about the site, please contact:

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General information on the site may be found at:

Community Free Library

86 Public Square
Holley, New York 14470
(585)-638-6987

[http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/
npl/diazchemical/](http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/diazchemical/)

PHASE TWO TREATMENT

The thermal treatment system uses heat to turn the contaminants in the soil and groundwater into vapors. The vapors will then be captured by extraction wells and treated by a combination of compression, cooling, condensation and granular activated carbon. The system will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, EPA will excavate soil from two areas. The excavated soil will be consolidated, thermally treated, and disposed of off-site. The excavated areas will be backfilled with clean soil. EPA will monitor the air around the perimeter, monitor noise, and follow a traffic control plan to minimize disruptions to the neighborhood.

After the second phase of operations is completed, EPA will remove the treatment equipment and restore the property. This will include regrading the site to ensure it has proper drainage and revegetation so as to prevent erosion.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will begin the second and final phase of the thermal treatment of the contaminated soil and groundwater at the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site in Holley, NY in early July 2021. The larger-scale system is being used to treat the remainder of the on-site contamination. EPA started constructing the system in May 2020, using samples and other information obtained during the first phase of treatment that used a smaller-scale version of the system. EPA treated about 10% of the contaminated soil and groundwater at the site under that first phase, which was completed in October 2018.

Construction, originally slated to begin in March 2020, was postponed in consultation with the Village of Holley. Following appropriate COVID-19 health and safety protocols, construction was completed in early June 2021.

The final phase of treatment targets 1.5 acres of the site and will be performed in two stages. The treatment system is projected to operate for up to four years to clean up the site.



Figure 1: Heater Wells Under Construction

SITE HISTORY

The Diaz Chemical Superfund site is located about 25 miles west of Rochester, New York and includes the five-acre former Diaz Chemical Corporation facility, located at 40 Jackson Street in the Village of Holley, in Orleans County. Diaz Chemical manufactured specialty organic chemicals for the agricultural, pharmaceutical, photographic, color and dye, and personal care products industries. The facility released chemicals into the environment from 1975 to 2002.

In January 2002, a reactor vessel overheated in a process building, causing its safety valve to rupture. Approximately 75 gallons of a chemical mixture was released through a roof stack vent. The release consisted primarily of a mixture of steam, toluene, and 2-chloro-6-fluorophenol, as well as related chemicals. The mixture landed on properties in the residential neighborhood immediately adjacent to the facility and was visible as red-colored droplets. As a result of the release, several residents voluntarily relocated to area hotels with assistance from Diaz Chemical.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and EPA sampled indoor air, soil, interior surfaces, and household items in the affected neighborhood. The data indicated that there were no immediate or short-term threats to people's health. In June 2003, Diaz Chemical filed for bankruptcy and abandoned the facility, leaving behind large volumes of chemicals in drums and tanks. From 2003 to 2007, EPA removed these chemicals and dismantled the Diaz Chemical production buildings. On July 22, 2004, the site was placed on EPA's National Priorities List.

With assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, EPA purchased eight houses and provided the owners with relocation assistance. In addition, two individual tenants were assisted with relocating into new rental locations.

EPA performed a comprehensive study of the site to determine the nature and extent of contamination, assess potential risks to human health and the environment, and develop, screen and evaluate alternative treatment technologies. The study determined that site-related contamination does not exist in the surrounding residential area and, therefore, a neighborhood cleanup was not necessary.

On September 26, 2012, EPA selected a cleanup plan for the site that included thermal treatment of the contaminated soil and groundwater at the Diaz Chemical property and natural processes to address the groundwater contamination downgradient of the source areas. The cleanup plan also included building demolition to allow access to contaminated soil on site.

EPA determined that the sale or transfer of the eight EPA-owned properties was consistent with the final cleanup and negotiated an agreement with the Village of Holley and the Village of Holley Development Corporation (VHDC). EPA transferred the eight properties to the VHDC in June 2017. Working with a local realtor and law firm, VHDC sold the houses in September 2017 and shared the proceeds with EPA.